CHAPTER IV

INVASIONS BY SYRIAN AND BACTRIAN GREEKS KINGS

INDO-GREEK RULE IN INDIA AND ITS CULTURAL IMPACT

India suffered from the largest number of foreign invasions from 4th century B.C. to 2nd century A.D. 1 Alexander, the Great was the fore-runner of Chandragupta in the North West India and his invasion indirectly helped in the extension of the Mauryan empire in those regions. The next invasion is that of Seleucus Nikator - the Great King of Syria in C. 305 B.C. The remaining Yavan invasions followed from Bactria after the decline of the Mauryan empire.

Therefore the operations and impact of the Syrian invasion by Seleucus would be first discussed in this Chapter and then Bactrian invasions would be dealt with after completing the one by another Syrian King, Antiochus III.

1. The following is the list of foreign invasions that took place during 170 years from 327 B.C. onwards:

   1. Invasion by Alexander, the Great 327 - 325 B.C.
   2. Seleucus Nikator invades India C. 305 B.C.
   3. Invasion by Antiochus III, the Great C. 306 B.C.
   4. Invasion by Euthydemus C. 197 B.C.
   5. Demetrius Invasion & occupation of North-West India C. 187 B.C.
   6. YAVAN INVASION DURING PUSHYAMITRA'S REIGN After 187 B.C.
   7. Invasion by Eucratides C. 166 B.C.
   8. Parthian Mitratades' conquest of the Punjab and Sind. C. 150 B.C.
   9. Parthian Gondophares domination of North-West India between 21-47 A.D.
The invasion of India by Seleucus was continuation of Alexander's invasion.

In June 323 B.C., a little more than a year after his return from India, Alexander died at Babylon and his death brought an end to Macedonian rule in India. After his passing away, a great struggle for succession started among his generals who divided the vast empire among themselves. Territories in Western Asia were ultimately occupied by Seleucus Nikator. Seleucus was the son of Antiochus, a distinguished general of Philip of Macedon and his wife Laodike. Seleucus was a trusted general of Alexander the Great and had come to India with the King.

After the division of the Macedonian Empire among the followers of Alexander, he carried on several wars in the east. According to Vincent Smith, Seleucus surmounted Nikator or the conqueror by reason of his many victories had established himself as Satrap at Babylon after the partition of Triparadise in B.C. 321 but six years later was driven out by his rival Antigonus and compelled to flee to Egypt. After three years exile he recovered Babylon in B.C. 312 and devoted himself to the consolidation and extension of his power.

1. H.J. Masson, Ancient India, p. 98
2. PHAI, p. 271
3. V.A. Smith, Asoka, p. 14
He attached and subjugated the Baktrians in B.C. 306 and assumed the royal title. He is known to the historians as King of Syria, although that province formed only a small part of his wide dominion which included all Western India.

He next made an expedition into India. Appianus says that he crossed the Indus and waged war on Chandragupta, King of Indians, who dwelt about it until he made friends and entered into matrimonial relations with him.

While Chandragupta was engaged in the consolidation of his empire, Seleucus was laying the foundation of his power in Western Asia and preparing to attempt the recovery of Alexander's Indian conquests. The eastern provinces of his realm extended to the borders of India and he naturally desired to recover the Macedonian conquests in that country which had been practically abandoned, although never formally relinquished.

In pursuit of this object Seleucus crossed the Indus in or about 305 B.C. and attempted to imitate the victorious march of Alexander. It is impossible, says Smith, to determine how far the invading army penetrated into the Indian territory. Probably Seleucus was not allowed to advance far beyond the (Jhelum) Hydaspes which formed the eastern boundary of the dominions of Sophutes. He came in conflict with Chandragupta.

1. V.A. Smith, Asoka, p. 14
2. Appianus Syr. 55; Indian Antiquity Vol. VI, p. 114
   Appianus used the word 'Kedos' - meaning connection by marriage.
3. V.D. Mahajan, History of India, p. 303
4. V.A. Smith, Asoka, p. 15
5. S.I. p. 86, fn. 2.
Maurya who did not allow Seleucus to advance further. When Smith wrote this some facts were still uncovered. The latest view is that Seleucus possibly could cross the Indus and the battle was enjoined. He concluded with Chandragupta a treaty of peace by the term of which the Indian provinces formerly held by Darius and Alexander were definitely acknowledged to form part of the empire of Chandragupta.

CONFLICT WITH CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

It will be seen that the classical writers do not give us any detailed record of the actual conflict between Seleucus and Chandragupta. They merely speak of the results. There can be no doubt that the invader could not make much headway and concluded an alliance which was cemented by a marriage contract.

Dr. Smith observes that the current action that the Syrian King gave his daughter in marriage to Chandragupta is not warranted by evidence which merely testifies to a matrimonial alliance. But the cession of territory "is consequence of the epigamia (marriage contract) and rightly be regarded as dowry given to a bridegroom."

1. V.D. Mahajan, History of India, p. 303.
2. PHAI, p. 272.
3. V.A. Smith, Asoka, p. 15.
"In India he (Seleucus) came into conflict with the famous conqueror Chandragupta (better known as Sandrocottus), grandfather of the still more famous Asoka. At first he prepared stoutly against this monarch but realizing that the advantages to be gained were far outweighed by the risks to come to terms with him. Ceding the Greek possessions in India up to the Hindu Kush, in exchange for 500 trained war elephants and large sums of money, Seleucus sealed the treaty by giving his daughter to the Indian monarch and it was faithfully observed on both sides.

Summing up the entire evidence, it would appear that Seleucus gave his daughter in marriage to Chandragupta for the following circumstances support this view:

1. Seleucus was definitely checked & defeated in the military contest and he wanted to forge an alliance with his powerful neighbour in the east that was possible only in giving away his daughter in marriage to the victor.

2. The large chunks of territories ceded merely prove not only Seleucus' defeat but also dowry or gifts to the bridegroom.

3. The silence or using an indefinite language by the Greek writers who are so explicit in regard to explicit Alexander, clearly shows that they are hiding the fact of giving away a Greek daughter to one defeated adversaries.

4. Here the Indian writers who have been conspicuously silent on Alexander's invasion clearly state about Chandragupta marrying Seleucus' daughter. Pratisangaparva of Shauvishya Purana says:—तदनुष्ठितः सिद्धार्थाधिपतिः वृजेन्द्रसुरि च शतादरिक क्रियाशृणु ||

5. Even otherwise Seleucus being much older than Chandragupta who had just assumed royalty in the beginning of his youth—would possibly have an daughter of marriageable age and so Seleucus would certainly have a grown up daughter to give in marriage.
Mere important details are given by Strabo who says, "The Indians occupy (in part) some of the countries situated along the Indus which formerly belonged to the Persians. Alexander deprived the Arimans of them and established there settlements of his own. But Seleucus Nicator gave them to Sandrocottus in consequence of a marriage contract and received in turn 500 elephants." The Indians occupied a larger portion of Ariana, which they had received from Macedonians.

The inclusion of Kabul valley within the Mauryan Empire is, however, proved by the inscriptions of Asoka, the grandson of Chandragupta, which speak of the Yonas and Gandharas as vassals of the empire. And the evidence of Strabo probably points to the cession by Seleucus of a large part of the Iranian Tableland besides the riparian provinces on the Indus.

TERRITORIES CEDED

Thus the Indian emperor obtained, according to Raychaudhuri, some of the provinces situated along the Indus, which formerly belonged to the Persians. The ceded territory comprised a large portion of Ariana itself, a fact ignored by Tarn. In exchange the Mauryan monarch gave a comparatively small recompense of 500 elephants.

It is believed that the territory ceded by the Syrian King included four Satrapies—Aria (Herat), Arachosia (Kandihar) Gedrosia (Makrem); Parempisadai (Kabul). About 302 B.C. an Ambassador named Megasthenes was also despatched to the Court of Patliputra.

2. Ibid., p. 78; WW Tarn, "The Greeks in Bactria and India" p. 100
3. PHAI, p. 273.
4. Ibid.
5. H. G. Rawlinson, India: A Short Cultural History, p. 66
Seleucus got from Chandragupta 500 war elephants for use in his coming trial of strength with Antigonus I. The price was the cession to Chandragupta of an eastern fringe of the former Persian dominions. The ceded zone must have included Lashkan on the Kabul river near Jalalabad and Kandahar in the Helmand valley, for in both these places there are inscriptions engraved by Chandragupta's grandson and second successor Asoka, and there is no evidence that the frontier between the Mauryan and the Seleucid empire was ever moved farther westward than the line agreed between Chandragupta and Seleucus I in C. 303 B.C. 7

TREATY WITH CHANDRAGUPTA

The expedition proved abortive and ended in a somewhat humilitating treaty by which Seleucus had to cede to the Indian king valuable territories, the satrapies of Arachosia, Paropamisadae, Gedrosia, together with portions of Arabia and Gedrosia and thus Chandragupta Maurya was able to extend his empire unto the borders of Persia and to rule over a Greater India beyond India's natural frontiers, and this is why his grandson Asoka mentions in R.F. II, and VIII (अन्तर्नाम अवस्थानम [अन्तर्नाम अवस्थानम]) 2 the Syrian king Antiochus as his immediate neighbour.

The recent discovery of the Greek Inscription at Kandahar has now made it clear that the Yavan province should be located round about Kandahar.

1. A.J. Toynbee, Mankind and Mother Earth, p. 225
2. ACHI, p. 7; Rock Edict, II line No. 3,
3. Dr. M.B. Pandey, Asoka Ke Abhileka, p. 27
4. Ibid, p. 40
Influence of Seleucus

The abortive invasion by Seleucus did not make any impression on India as a military expedition, on the other hand it physically extended the Mauryan empire towards the west. Besides it helped India in two ways; one, it possibly gave a foreign queen to the family of Chandragupta who must have influenced in her own ways the Mauryan administration and the court of which we have hardly any record, the second was Seleucid ambassador Megasthenes who has virtually given the history of his times to us.

Megasthenes

Arrain tells us that Megasthenes originally lived with Sibyrtios, the satrap of Arachosia. He was sent thence to Pataliputra when he often visited the Mauryan emperor and wrote a history on Indian affairs. The work of Megasthenes entitled 'Indica' has been lost. The fragments that survive in quotations by the later authors like Strabo, Arrain, Diodoras and others have been collected by Schwanbeck and translated into English by Mr Crindle.

As Prof. Rehys Davids observes Megasthenes possessed very little critical judgment and was, therefore, often misled by wrong information received from others. But he is a truthful witness concerning matters which came under his personal observation. The most important piece of information supplied by him is, as Rehys Davids points out, the description of Pataliputra which Arrain quotes in Chapter X of his Indica.

1. Chibnall's trans - p. 254
2. PHAL, p. 274
3. Patanjali testifies नमात्मक जानकारी, जानकारी के उपर की यथा ।
According to another historian, Megasthenes resided for several years in the course of which he admitted, as we are told, to several interviews also with his Queen who was the daughter of his friend and sovereign, Seleucus Nikator, the King of Syria. With assiduous observation and inquiry he collected the materials from which he composed his famous work on India, called the Indika, the contents of which are so conspicuous that it became paramount authority and the main source whence subsequent writers derived their account of India. Strabo, indeed, accused him of mendacity, but in spite of his censure he frequently cites him. Megasthenes is now recognised as a writer of scrupulous veracity, for it is found that the picture of Indian life, customs, institutions, so far as can now be judged singularly correct.

Megasthenes found the government of the Indian King strong and well organised, established in a magnificent fortified city, worthy of a great Kingdom.

1. Dr. B.H.Puri, India as Described by Classical Greek Writers, p. 3
2. Ibid.
3. V.A. Smith, Asoka, p. 16
With the advent of Alexander the contact between India and Mediterranean world became more direct and constant. This is a fact of immense significance not only to the history of India but to that of the world.

Even when Alexander's Indian empire faded into history, India continued to be in touch with Greece and the Western World. We know that after Seleucus' invasion of India, a Greek ambassador named Megasthenes was accredited to the Mauryan Court. He had left some very interesting account of India of these days. What can be more intimate contact than the marriage of daughter of Seleucus with the Indian King Chandragupta Maurya. He is reported to have sent Seleucus some strange Indian drugs and used to offer sacrifices in Hellenic manner to Alexander's alters on the Hyphaees. His son Bindusar continued to maintain cordial relations with the western Kings.

**FOREIGN RELATIONS**

The foreign relations of the Mauryan Kings provide an oasis in the desert of invasions before and after, Chandragupta always remained friendly with the foreign powers after he concluded a treaty of friendship with Seleucus. His subsequent diplomatic relations were cordial and friendly.

1. K.A. Nihal Kanta Sastri, *Age of Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 2
2. Ibid, p. 354.
His son Bindusara pursued a pacific policy towards the western powers. He might be Amritraghata (Slayer of the foes) for the Indian Kings, but he knew the value of the friendship with western Yavan Kings. Greek writers name the son and successor of Bindusara, Bhitraghata (Slayer of the enemies). It may be a popular title of Bindusar which was given only by the Greek writers.

Strabo tells us that the King of Syria despatched to Bindusara's court an ambassador. Pliny tells us that Philadelphos, King of Egypt (B.C. 285-247) sent an envoy named Dionysios. Smith doubts whether Dionysios presented his credentials to Bindusar or his son and successor, Asoka. It appears that Dionysios was Egyptian envoy to Bindusar, as he does not mention Asoka.

The exchange of Indian drugs for Greek wine and figs, the naive requested that his imperial brother would oblige him with a Greek Sophist are only surviving records of what must have been a regular and constant intercourse between the races. Bindusar's son Asoka (C. 270-232 B.C.) not only continued these cordial relations he even added new leaves of friendship.

We get an authentic record of his foreign contacts. In his XIIIth Rock Edict dated 12th year of his reign 'Devanampiya' states that he was in contact with the Kings:

In his Rock Edict II in Asoka refers to the Greek Kings Antiyoka and the four Kings beyond him. In Rock Edict XIII he alludes to Antiyoka and the four other Kings who are specified to be Tulamaya, Maka, Antekina and Alikysundala. They are identified as follows:

Antiyoga = Antiochus II Thoes of Syria (C. 260-246 B.C.)
Tulamaya = Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (285-247 B.C.);
Maka = Magas King of Cyrcue (C. 300-258 B.C.);
Antekina = Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia;
Alikysundala = Alexander of Epirus (C. 272-258 B.C.).

1. McCrindle Ancient India as described in Classical Literature, p.108
2. H.C. Rawlinson, Bactria, p. 142
3. S.I. (No.18) p. 39
4. S.I. (No. 7) p. 18
5. S.I. (No.18) p. 39
For almost a hundred years after the failure of Seleucus Nikator no Greek sovereign perhaps attacked India. The Syrian King Antiochus III attacked India around 206 B.C. with a powerful force he led an expedition across the Hindu Kush and occupied the Kabul valley.

The Second Greek invasion of India says, Rapson amounted to a little more than a reconnaissance in force. About the middle of the third century B.C., Bocrotos, governor of Bactria revolted and assumed the title of king. He was succeeded by his son Bocrotos II, who was succeeded by Puthys. Antiochus (223-187 B.C.) made an attempt to recover the lost province of Bactria but after made peace with Puthys.

About Antiochus III's entry into Bactria, Mcgrindle writes that Antiochus received the young prince Demetrius son of

1. V.D. Meleahan, Ancient India, p. 312
2. Rapson, 291, p. 397
3. PHAL, p. 379
4. Mcgrindle, Ancient India as described in Classical literature, p. 209
Hithydemos and judging from his appearance, conversation and dignity of his manners that he was worthy of royal power he first promised to give him one of his own daughters and secondly conceded the royal title to his father and having on the other point caused a written treaty to be drawn up and the terms of the treaty to be confirmed on oath he marched away after liberally provisioning his troops and accepting the elephants belonging to Hithydemos.

Antiochus, the Great (205 B.C.) marched through the hills of the country now called Afghanistan. Antiochus III crossed the Hindu Kush in 201-206 descended into India and renewed his friendship of King Subhashena (probably Subhaga) perhaps successor of Vira Sena who according to Taranatha soon after Asoka's death established his sway over Gandhara.

Ancient India
1. McGrindle, *Historians as described in Classical Literature*, p. 209

2. W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks in India and Bactria*, p. 130
When Antiochus crossed the Hindukush and marched down the Kabul valley, he found himself in the territory of a prince whom Polybius (XI, 34) called Sophagassenus the King of the Indians. Rapson opines that Indian history knows no ruler of corresponding name and it has therefore been conjectured that Subhashana was some local Raja who had taken advantage of the decay of the Mauryan empire to establish a kingdom of his own in the country west of the Indus. Whosoever he was he plainly realised that he was quite unfit to offer any effective resistance to the seasoned troops of his adversary. At the same time Antiochus was in no mood to emulate the Indian adventure of his invincible fore-runner, he had already been three years in the East. The West was calling loudly and he had enhanced his reputation by his prowess that he could afford to be satisfied with a bloodless victory. Accordingly he accepted the submission of Sophagassenus who re-victualled his army for him and handed over a number of war elephants.

A heavy indemnity was imposed. This last, however, Antiochus did not wait to receive.

McCrindle says that Antiochus renewed his friendship with Sophagassenus, the King of the Indians but does not say of the attack.

1. CHI, p.392
2. It was renewed friendship, not submission or surrender. It presupposes earlier dealings.
3. McCrindle, AIADEL, p. 209
Antiochus hurried back with all speed towards Mesopotamia along Choo sueg the route that ran through Arachosia and Dregiuns to Caramania.

McCrindle says that Sophagaseus gave more elephants to Antiochus until he had 150 altogether and having once more provisioned his troops set out again personally with his army leaving Andros Thamus of Cyziens, the duty of taking home the treasure which this King had agreed to hand over to him.1

There is nothing specific in the accounts of these writers to show that Sophagaseus was vanquished by the Syrian King in war or was regarded by the latter as a subordinate ruler. On contrary the statement that Antiochus renewed his friendship (or alliance) with Sophagaseus, the King of the Indians" proves that the two monarchs met on equal terms and friendly relations were established between them. The renewal of friendship on the part of the Greek King, and the surrender of elephants on the part of his Indian friend only remind us of the relations subsisting between Chandragupta and Seleucus. Further the expression "renewal of friendship" seems to suggest that Subhagaseus had had previous dealings with Antiochus. Perhaps handing over elephants and treasure to Antiochus was an act of a generous friend to help his friend in times of adversity, as Antiochus was then threatened by his enemies from the west.

According to Smith the brief campaign of Antiochus III could have had no appreciable effect on the institutions of India and its occurrence probably was unknown to many of the countries east of the Indus.

Dr. Raychaudhari says that the loss of the northern provinces by the last Mauryan kings is confirmed by Polybius that about 206 B.C. there ruled over them a king named Sophagasenus. Antiochus III's departure thus left the Bactrian Greeks free to pursue their schemes of expansion and aggrandisement.

1. V.A. Smith, Early History of India, p. 255
2. PHAI, p. 361
II INVASIONS BY BACTRIAN GREEKS

One of the factors that led to the extinction of the dynasty of the imperial Mauryas was the advent of the Yavanas invaders through the north-western gate of India. Indeed the most interesting feature of the post Maurya period of Indian history is the establishment of foreign supremacy in Uttarapatha, Aparanta (Pas'chaddesa) and the adjoining region of Madhyadash, successively by the several powers and the Yavanas were the first among them.

THE BACTRIAN GREEKS

Parthia (Khurasan and adjoining region to the South east of the Caspian Sea) and Bactria (district around Balkh, ancient Balhika in northern Afghanistan beyond the Hindu Kush) were two districts of the Seleucid empire. Some time about 250 B.C., both the countries revolted against the Seleucid over Lord Antiochus (II) Theos (261 - 246 B.C.): Parthia under a native of unknown origin named Arsaces and Bactria under its Greek Governor Diodotus. Neither Antiochus II nor any of his immediate successors, Seleucus II (246-226 B.C.) and Seleucus III (225-223 B.C.) was powerful enough to suppress the rebellious provinces. The next emperor,

1. Including the Sakas and the Kushanas
2. A.I.U., p.101 ; Manthrac mentioned the Yavanas in the Manthuar (II, 41)
3. The nearest date is c. 247 B.C.
4. A.I.U., p. 102
Antiochus (III) the Great (223-187 B.C.), was engaged for some years in an attempt to regain both Parthia and Bactria, but having found the subjugation of the newly founded Kingdoms quite hopeless he concluded (as we see later on) peace with them and practically acknowledged the independence of both the countries. ¹

BACTRIA

The migration of the nomad hordes from high Asia which changed the course of Indian history is one of the outstanding events in the history of the world.

The westward track followed by the hordes was well north of the Hindukush and Bactria lay on its southern flank. It is probable, says Moreland, though not certain that when the Greeks first moved in the direction of Kabul, the danger from the north and east was already realised, but in any case, there is no doubt that Eueratides was driven out of Bactria by the pressure of Parthians on the west and the Sakas in the North. ²

The fertile plain of Bactria, called by Strabo, the pride of Arians, was drained by the Oxus and a few other less known rivers and was noted for its products such as olive, filphium, and other medical herbs, fine crops of corn and varieties of fruit trees and its excellent breeds of sheep and horses. The land was not unknown to the writers of ancient India who describe it as Balhika. ³

1. A.I.U. p. 103
2. Moreland, History of India, p. 15
3. ACHI p. 139
THE PEOPLE OF BACTRIA

Rawlinson has quoted from the annals of Chinese

1 historian Chang Chien, Chinese historian brought an account of Bactria to China in C. 126 B.C. (vide India and China by Dr. P.C. Bagchi) and says that the Tashinas of Bactria were very like the other tribes between Margiana and Turkestan. These people all spoke various dialects, but all understood one another. They were agricultural people and treated their wives with so extraordinary respect and allowed them great liberty and were all distinguished by deep-set eyes and thick beards. They were both civil and military soldiers and only fond of trade.

1. The Chinese historian Chang Chien brought an account of Bactria to China in C. 126 B.C.

Dr. P.C. Bagchi, India and China, p 4

2. H.G. Rawlinson, Bactria, p 97.
Throughout the period of this inquiry, Bactria played an important part in shaping the destiny of India. It must certainly have been provided passage to the Aryan multitude in the hoary past. It is one of the most fertile plains of this whole region.

Rawlinson holds that the chief safeguard for the Aryans of Western Asia was the ancient Iranian province of Bactria - the great buffer State between the Persian empire and the people of the Steppes of the Central Asia. Rawlinson has rightly said that it was here in Bactria that the East merged into the West and the West eventually over flowed its bounds and enroached upon the Eastern World, producing a wonderful cosmopolitan civilization.

Bactria, "the pride of Iran" was looked upon as the heart of the empire, the cradle of national religion. The fierce independent Iranian nobles of Bactrias were celebrated for their prowess and cavalrymen for the tenacity with which they clung to their national customs.

Since the beginning of the recorded history of India, Bactria played an important role in influencing the course of events in the sub-continent. It is said that even before Bactria was conquered by Persia, its contact with that country was intimate and continuous. Many Iranians had settled in Bactria. After it was conquered by Cyrus, it was put under a Satrap on account of its strategic importance. It has been a meeting

---

1. I.H.S., p. 212
2. It has been mentioned as 'Bakhtrish' among the Satrapies in the inscriptions of Darius I (S.I., No.1.2, pp.4-5)
The three great trade routes of Asia—
from India, from China and from Black Sea and Levant converged of
here. An army occupying Balkh menaced half the continent of
Asia.

The inhabitants of this area must have been the soldiers of the
Achaemenid Kings who had overrun the North Western parts of
India during the Persian invasion. This role did not change
when the Macedonian adventurer overrun the same areas about
two centuries later. Even this region provided an outlet for
the military energy of Seleucus Nicator whose forces were
repulsed by the Mauryan forces of Chandragupta Maurya.

When Alexander occupied it after his victory over Darius III
in 330 B.C., he made no changes in the Persian administration.
But Alexander's many followers had settled there and formed an
important part of the population. The mixed population was
living under the Seleucid King after the death of Seleucus.

Alexander had realised the strategic importance of Bactria
to his eastern possessions and had established there a large
military colony. After his death this colony had grown into
the dimensions of an important kingdom, the veterans having
freely intermarried with the Iranian and Scythian populace.

---
1. I.H.E., p. 212
In c. 250 B.C. Bactria Satrapy revolted against the Syrian empire and their independence was recognised some forty years later by Antiochus the Great Tarn says that the first business of every Greek King of Bactria was to hold the gateway of Iran against the Semi-barbarians of the north and north west, a task they successfully accomplished till the great upheaval of the people caused by the migration of the Yue Chi.

The Indo Greeks who played such an important role in India used Bactria as a spring board. So was the case with the Sakas and Kushanas. This has indeed being "a boiling pot of humanity" since the time immemorial. The Hunas added heat to it and burst upon India causing widespread death and destruction. This boiling pot poured its contents eastwards to cool and be absorbed in the plains of North India.

The history of Bactria is, therefore, the history of the absorption of a race but not before its present results which are of considerable importance.

1. I H Sp. p.212
The later expeditions of Demetrius, Nearchus and Alexander which covered with intervals a period of about four decades (190-165 B.C.) penetrated far into the interior of the country. These were not wholly transient raids for in the Punjab and adjacent territories they led to the establishment of Greek rule which lasted over a century and half.\(^1\)

**The Political Condition of India**

The disorders which followed upon the breaking up of the Mauryan Empire left the Punjab as a tempting prey to an ambitious conqueror and the Bactrian Macedonians were unable to resist the opportunity. About 190 B.C. as we see later on, Demetrius invaded North Western India. He left Bactria proper in a precarious condition. In consequence, the Scythian at last managed to cross the Caspian and over run the country and Molonedros fled to Sagala.\(^2\)

---

1. Dr. K.S. Tripathi, History of Ancient India, p. 208
2. H.G. Rawlinson, Indian Historical Tradition, p. 212
Seleucus was succeeded by his son Antiochus I Soter in the year C.305 B.C. He was a joint ruler prior to about 261 B.C. He was called the great. He was called in his lifetime 'Theos' or the God. During his reign Bactria and Parthia both revolted and became independent. It appears that Diodotus I who led this Bactrian revolt, had been a governor of the Seleucid empire for a long time. He was not on friendly terms with the Parthian leader Arsakes who had to maintain a huge army for the fear of Diodotus I. Even other Satraps feared Diodotus I and Seleucus II gave one of his sisters in marriage to get his help.

Diodotus I

Diodotus, the founder of the independent Hellenic Kingdom of Bactria, appears to have ruled over that country probably along with Sogdiana for a long time, first as governor of the Seleucid emperors and then as an independent monarch. He is said to have assisted his master, Antigonus I in his struggle with Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt about 274-273 B.C.

Diodotus II

Diodotus II who according to Justin, succeeded his (Diodotus I) father, made an alliance with Parthia with the result that Arsakes could defeat his King Seleucus II when Parthia was attacked around 240 B.C. Thus both Bactria and Parthia were saved from the Greek domination. It appears that Diodotus II was removed and killed by Buthydemus around 230 B.C.

1. A.I.U., p. 104
2. Ibid.
RUTYDEMUS

As discussed above, after the conclusion of his struggle with Parthia, Antiochus III turned his arms against Bactria about 208 B.C. and soon besieged Rutydemus in his capital city called Bactra or Zariaspa which has been identified with the modern Balkh. The siege lasted for two years, but neither side gained any decisive victory. At last, Teles, whom the Bactrian king sent to the emperor to negotiate a settlement, was successful in convincing Antiochus III about the encouragement that the struggle might give to the barbarian hordes hovering about the northern fringe of Bactria, to fall upon the country and destroy all traces of Hellenic civilization. The Seleucid emperor, whose presence in the western part of his dominions had by that time become an urgent necessity, was too glad to be out of the embarrassing situation.

Ultimately Demetrius, the young son of Rutydemus, was sent to the emperor's camp as an official envoy of the Bactrian king, and a formal alliance was concluded (c. 206 B.C.). Antiochus III agreed to the use of the royal title by Rutydemus and also to give one of his daughters in marriage to Demetrius. Soon after he crossed the Hindu Kush, marched down the valley of the Kabul river, and reached the country ruled by Sophagosenus (probably Sanskrit Subhagasena), king of the Indians, who is not known from any other source. It has been noted above how, after the death of Asoka about 226 B.C., the unifying power of the Maurya empire declined, and the provinces, especially the outlying ones, were assuming

1. Mentioned even in the Behisten Inscription of Darius, p. 63.
2. Polybius XII, p. 29
3. This marriage seems to have actually taken place, as king Agathocles (a son of Demetrius ?) of the house of Rutydemus, and Demetrius is known to have claimed descent from Antiochus the conqueror.
After independence one after another under ambitious provincial governors, one of whom was probably Subhagasena himself or one of his predecessors. Antiochus III went back to Mesopotamia after having accepted the submission of the Indian king, who paid an indemnity and surrendered a number of war elephants.

The abundance of Euthydemus' coins and the great variety of his portraits on them suggest that he had a fairly long reign over an extensive territory. He is usually supposed to have died about 190 B.C. His silver coins have been found in large numbers in Balkh (Bactria) and Bukhara (Sogdiana), to the north of the Hindu Kush; but they are less common in the regions of Kabul, Kandahar, and Seistan, where his bronze issues are very common. Scholars believe that towards the end of his reign, possibly after 197 B.C. when Antiochus III became hopelessly involved in his struggle in the west and was unable to interfere in the affairs of the east, Euthydemus extended his sway over southern Afghanistan and the adjoining area of Iran and also over parts of north-western India. But the man who established Greek supremacy on Indian soil seems to have been his son Demetrius whose early expeditions in India may have been led as commander of his father's armies.
According to Strabo (c. 54 B.C.E.-24), who refers to the authority of Apollodorus of Artemis, the Greeks of Bactria became masters of Ariana, a vague term roughly indicating the eastern districts of the Persian empire, of India. It is said that the Bactrian chiefs, particularly Menander, conquered more nations than Alexander and that these conquests were achieved, partly by Menander and partly by Demetrius who was the son of Euthydemus, king of the Bactrians. Strabo further says: "They (i.e. the chiefs of the Bactrians) got possession not only of Putelene (the Sindhu delta) but also of the kingdoms of Sarsostos (Gurashtra i.e. Kathiawar or South-Kathiawar) and Sagaridis (probably Sagaradvipa meaning Cutch), which constitute the remainder of the coast. They extended their empire even as far as the Saras (i.e. the land of the Chinese and Tibetans in Central Asia) and Phryai (probably another Central Asian tribe)." The statement regards Menander and Demetrius as the greatest of the Yavana kings of Bactrian origin, but unfortunately does not specify the individual achievements of the two rulers.

---

1. The name Ariana appears to be associated with Iran and apparently also with Aria (modern Herat region). Ariana usually embraced the provinces of Parthia (Khoresea, Aras, the Paropanissadee (Kahul region), Arachosia (district round Kandahar), Drangiana (Selistan) Gedrosia (Baluchistan) and Sarmasia (Kirmn). Some writers think that by Ariana only Aria and Arachosia were meant.

2. While describing these regions the author of the Periplus says: "In these places there remain even to the present time signs of the expedition of Alexander such as ancient shrines, walls of forts, and great wells." Although Alexander did not penetrate so far south as Kathiawar this region came into contact with the Greeks as early as the time of Asoka's Yavana governor Tusha Shupa. The author of the Periplus also speaks of later Indo-Greek rulers such as Apollodotus and Menander whose coins were in use in his time at Broach.

*** Strabo's Geography XII, II.
The mention of Demetrius, king of Bactria, Afghanistan, and the western part of northern India, after Xenander, who actually flourished later than Demetrius and had nothing to do with Bactria, seems to go against chronological sequence and partially mars the historical value of the statement. But Indian literature also apparently refers to the exploits of the Bactrian Greeks under Demetrius about the beginning of the second century B.C. The Yuga-purana section of the Gargi-Sambhita speaks of Yavana expeditions against Saketa (near Ayodhya in the present Fyzabad District, U.P.), Panchala (Bolikhend in a narrow sense), Mathura and Kusumadhvaja or Pushapurna (the same as Pataliputra++) after the reign of the Maurya king Baisiska (c.200 B.C.) who, according to the Vishnupurana, was the fourth in descent from Asoka and third in ascent from the last Maurya king Brihadratha, overthrown by Pushyamitra about 187 B.C.

Evidently, the Yavana invasion of Saketa and Madhyamika (modern Nagari near Chitor, Rajputana), referred to in the Mahabhashya as event that happened during the lifetime of the grammarian Patanjali, should be assigned to the same epoch.++ (Mahabhashya 3.2 p.111). Though the Mahabhashya seems to contain some later interpolations, Patanjali was probably a contemporary of Pushyamitra and presumably also of some later Maurya rulers who suffered defeats at the hands of the Bactrians. The overthrow of Brihadratha by Pushyamitra seems to have been one of the consequences of the success of the Yavanas against the Mauryas.

1. The passage seems to indicate that the Yavanas blockaded the city by a mud wall and confusion set in throughout the dominions.

++ Mahabhashya 3.2 p.111

++ तत् संति भर्तर्थिः पर्वतालि समुद्रा स्तथा ९५: अवगम्य स्विनिक्षता साध्यविनितू कसु मुदक्षम् परमेश्वरणम् युगपुराणा ११.९४,९५

did not stay for a long time in Madhyadessa because of "internal
dissensions" leading to "a cruel and dreadful war in their own
kingdom which arose amongst themselves." The Greeks appear to have
lost Madhyadessa and temporarily parts of the Punjab and the lower
Sindhu valley to Pushyanmitra.¹

Dr. Raychaudhari testifies that a war with Greeks in the days
of Pushyanmitra is vouched for by Kalidas. In his Malavikagnimitram,
the poet refers to a conflict between prince Vasumittra, grandson and
general of Pushyamitra and a Yavana on the southern bank of the
Sind.² (a stream in the Central India (Malavikagnimitram by Kalidas

Demetrius's association with India is proved by literary as well
as archaeological evidence. He issued some coins of square shape with
Greek legend on the obverse and Kharoshthi on the reverse. Scholars
have identified him with king Dattamitra of the Mahabharata.²

1. The expulsion of the Greeks from the eastern part of the Punjab
and the adjoining region is indicated by references in the
Malavikagnimitra and Divyavedana mentioned above)(pp.85-97)

2. PHAI , p.379. A stream of the same name in Madhya Pradesh.

Mahabharat, I-139-30
Some recent discoveries of coins make it necessary to mention the Indo-Greek King Agathocles (185 B.C. -175 B.C.) here. Prof. K.D. Bajpai has brought to light some coins of Agathocles which are of immense historical value. According to Raychaudhary, Agathocles perhaps belonged to the House of Euthydemos and issued a series of coins (and medals) in commemoration of Alexander, Antiochus Nikator, Euthydemos the Divine. This view is supported by other scholars also. According to Prof. Bajpai, the figures of Lord Krishna holding a Chakra and Gada (Club) and of Balarama, holding hala and Musala prove an extra-ordinary importance of these deities in that period. Both the figures are shown bearing the dress of Braja people. This proves Indian cultural influence on the Indo Greeks and also the prevalence of Bhagavata Sect during this period.

2. PHAI, p. 423
3. AIU, p. 109
EUCRATIDES

There are stray references to Eucratides' career in the works of Strabo and Justin but details are lacking. Strabo tells us that Eucratides had a thousand cities under him, but whether they were in India or Bactria is not known, but some of them must have been in India in the former Bactrian possessions. Justin says that Eucratides was King of the Bactrians. Justin says that his mother, a princess of royal blood, gave a locus-standi to him.

Eucratides had carried on the struggle for succession against Demetrius and successors of Demetrius in Bactria and India. The occupation of the Bactrian throne by Eucratides, who founded the city of Eucratidea in Bactria, seems to have taken place about 171 B.C. Justin, whose work is a compilation from that of Pompeius Trogus (a contemporary of Augustus), says: "Almost at the same time that Mithradates (the first Parthian king of that name who reigned, according to many scholars, from 171 to 136 B.C.) ascended the throne among the Parthians, Eucratides began to reign among the Bactrians.... Eucratides carried on several wars with great spirit and, though much reduced by his losses in them, yet, when he was besieged by Demetrius, king of the Indians, with a garrison of only 300 soldiers, he repulsed by continuous sallies a force of 60,000 enemies." Being harassed for about four months, Demetrius was compelled to raise the siege. Strabo (a contemporary of Augustus) says that Eucratides made himself master of the thousand cities possibly those of Bactria, while Justin says that "he reduced India (probably the land on the Sindhu) to subjection." India seems to have been subjugated after the death of Demetrius that may be roughly assigned to about 165 B.C.

2. P. H. A. I., p. 383
Justin tells us¹ that while Eueratides was returning home after one of his conquering expeditions in India he was attacked and murdered by his son. He drove his chariot over the dead body of his father and ordered the dead body of his father to be thrown away.

There has been a difference of opinion amongst scholars regarding the name of the murderer but later views prove that he could not have been the son of Eueratides. It is believed that Heliocles was the murderer of Eueratides. (Dr. Narain has identified the parricide as Plato—the eldest son of Eueratides.²)

During the reign of Eueratides, there were internal dissensions among his people in Bactria. Eueratides proceeded to conquer India, the Paropamisadas and the areas in Gandhara, Alia, Arachosia and Drangiana. There was also the constant menace of the Sakas who were occupying regions beyond the northern borders of Bactria. Whether the Sakas penetrated into Bactria during the reign of Eueratides or not, they certainly over ran Bactria during the reign of his son and successor.

Eueratides started his career with great promise and succeeded in extending his dominions. He tried to do too much in India and Bactria and therefore did not gain complete success, particularly in the internal dissensions among the people.

The discovery of a twenty stater pieces of Eueratides at Bukhara caused a sensation in the numismatic world during the last century.³ His coins are found in several parts of India. Eueratides is believed to have died in about 155 B.C.

1. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri quotes Justin, "Eueratides carried on several wars with great spirit and though much reduced by his losses in them, yet, when he was besieged by Demetrius, with a garrison of only 300 soldiers, he repulsed, by continual sallies, a force of 50,000 enemies" Ibid.


Heliocles is believed to be the immediate successor of Eu克拉tides. It appears that the Scythians or Sakas drove Heliocles out of Bactria. The Sakas were themselves driven out of their territories by the Yue Chi. We do not know the exact date of end of the reign of Heliocles. According to the Chinese sources, Bactria was occupied by the Scythians about 135 B.C. Therefore, the rule of Heliocles might have lasted some more years after that date.

After the loss of Bactria, the Yavanas continued to rule in Central and Southern Afghanistan and north-western India. Their rule in these regions was characterised by internecine fighting among the various princes belonging to the houses of Demetrius and Eu克拉tides. We gather from the coins, the names of more than 36 Indo-Bactrian Greek rulers, including Menander. Some of these rulers must have ruled contemporaneously with others in different parts of the Yavana dominions.

Heliocles was left with no alternative but to give up his claims to the lands on the other side of the Hindu Kush and to rule only over his Indian possessions.

1. V.D. Nahejan, Ancient India, p. 304
The author of the Periplus (c. A.D. 70-80) says that "to the present day ancient drachmae are current in Barygaza (Broach) bearing inscriptions in Greek letters and the devices of those who reigned after Alexander, namely Apollodotus and Menander. The Broach region possibly formed part of the Yavana dominions during the rule of Demetrius, Apollodotus and Menander. Apollodotus and Menander are also mentioned as Indian kings in the title of the lost forty-fourth book of Justin's work. Plutarch tells us that Menander was noted for justice and enjoyed great popularity with his subjects and that upon his death, which occurred in a camp, diverse cities contended for the possession of his ashes (cf. the story of the distribution of Buddha's ashes). Curiously enough, of all the Yavana kings of India, Menander alone has found a prominent place in Indian Buddhist tradition as a scholar and patron of Buddhism. He is identified with king Milinda who is one of the two leading characters in the Milinda-panha—"Questions of Milinda," a famous Buddhist text written in the form of a dialogue between the king and the Buddhist monk Nagasena. The monk is represented as solving all puzzles put to him by the king and as ultimately succeeding in converting the latter. The Indian form of the king's name is given as Milinda in Kshemendra's Avadana-kalpalata and the Tibetan Bstan-hgyur collection while the Shinkot inscription gives it more correctly as Menadra (i.e. Menandra, Menandra), which is found on the coins. According to the Milinda-panha tradition, Menander was born at a village called Kalasi-gra[m in the dvip[ or Doab of Alasanda (Alexandria near Kabul), and had his capital at Sakala, the modern Sialkot in the

1. The battle at Pataliputra seem to have been very terrible.
2. See General Notes
3. SBS '36 XVIII

His name is spell as मिन्दा in Roman and मिन्ड्रा in Sanskrit.

...and the Purana writer dwells in details in the utterly down fall political, ethical and social of the country.
Pujaia.lt is said that Under beaded ever the Kingdom to his son, retired from the world, and became not only a Buddhist monk but an Arhat. This fits in with Plutarch’s story about his ashes. Kshemendra refers to Menander a story which is sometimes also told about Kanishka, while an Indo-Chinese tradition associates him with the most famous statue of Buddha in Indo-China. Of course such legends are not always authentic; but the most interesting thing in this connection is the impression the foreign king must have made on the Indian mind.

Menander is usually assigned to the middle of the second century B.C., but he seems to have ruled at a later date, probably about 115-90 B.C. Some scholars, perhaps relying on the vague tradition ascribed to Apollodorus, believe that Menander was the Yavana ruler who invaded Saketa and Madhyamika during the lifetime of Patanjali, a contemporary of Pushyanitra. They apparently ignore the fact that the Gargi-Samhita assigns the Greek invasion of Madhyadesa and eastern India to a date soon after the reign of the later Maurya king Salisuka and probably before the accession of Pushyanitra about 187 B.C. As Menander’s reign is unanimously placed by scholars after Demetrius’s death which took place about 165 B.C., he may have, at best, been a later contemporary of Pushyanitra, and could not have been the Yavana king invading Madhyadesa and eastern India in the first quarter of the second century B.C. It may of course be suggested that Pushyanitra had to fight with the Yavanas first under Demetrius before and soon after his accession, and for a second time under Menander about the close of his reign. There is, however, an Indian tradition which seems to assign Menander to a date later than the end of Pushyanitra’s rule. According to the Buddhist traditions of north-western India as recorded in the Milinda-panha, Menander flourished 500 years after the Parinirvana, i.e. in the sixth century after Buddha’s death.
north-western India as recorded in the Milinda-panha, Menander, flourished 500 years after the Parinirvana, i.e. in the sixth century after Buddha's death.

Other authorities have suggested that Menander was a later contemporary of Eucratides, because "some of their square copper coins are so similar in style that they may reasonably be assigned not only to the same general period, but also to the same region—a region which must have passed from one rule to other". But similarity or dissimilarity of coin types appears to be due more to local and other reasons than to contemporaneity. As Menander probably flourished after the immediate successors of Demetrius, namely, Apollodotus, Agathocles and Antimachus, who fought with Eucratides, the beginning of his rule has to be assigned to a date later than the middle of the second century B.C. If it be true that he succeeded in establishing his suzerainty over all other Indo-Greek potentates of his time, the absence of Bactrian issues would rather place his reign after the Yavanas had lost Bactria and probably also Drangiana and parts of Arachosia.

The whole extent of Menander's dominions is indicated by the great variety and wide distribution of his coins which are found in large numbers not only in the valleys of the Kabul and the Sindhu but also in the western districts of the U.P. His coins against are known to have been current in Kadiawar in the first century A.D. According to a tradition ascribed to Apollodorus of Artemisia, Menander "crossed the Hyphasis to the east and reached the Isamus". The Hyphasis is probably the same as the Hyphasis or the Beas, while Isamus seems to be the Greek corruption of Prakrit Ichchumai (Sanskrit Ikshumati), a river of the Panchala country often identified with the modern Kalinadi running through Kumaun, chaudhmand and the Kansaj region.

The Shinkot steatite casket containing two groups of Kharoshthi inscriptions, the earlier of them referring to the reign of Menander, was discovered in the Bajaur tribal territory about twenty miles to
The relics of Sakyamuni Buddha are said to have been installed in the casket for worship first by a prince named Vijayamitra, apparently a feudatory of Menander, and afterwards by a chief named Vijayamitra who may have been the son or grandson of Vijayamitra. The discovery of the Shinkot record points to Menander's hold over the Peshawar region and possibly also over the upper Kabul valley. There could therefore have been no independent Yavana ruler at Takshashila and Pushkalavati during this period. Menander's dominions appear to have comprised the central parts of Afghanistan, North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Sind, Rajputana, and Saurashtra; and probably also a portion of the western U.P.
The name of Antialcidas has been found in the inscription on the Garuda Pillar at Besnagar near Bhilea in Madhya Pradesh. It states that the column was erected in honour of Vasudeva by the Yavana ambassador, Heliodoras son of Dion, an inhabitant of Takshila who had been accredited by Greek King Antialcidas to King Nispaputra Bhagabhadra Heliodoras is described in the inscription as a follower of Vishnu. The inscription also testifies to the existence of friendly and diplomatic relations of between the Yavana King/Taxila and the Suna King of Vidisa or Vashnagar. Antialcidas had his capital at Taxila and probably belonged to the Eucreatidian house.

The relation of Antialcidas with Heliodoras is indicated by the common coin type with which Heliodoras restruck of the coins of Agathocleia and State I. In some coins of Taxila region, Antialcidas is associated with a senior ruler named Lysias who is probably his father. The rule of Lysias seems to have been intervened between Heliocles and Antialcidas. According to B.C. Sircar, although it is suggested that these princes may have been ruling at the same time in different provinces like Kapisa, Pushkalavati and Takshila, there is reason to believe that Antialcidas is to be assigned to a little later date. An embassy of Antialcidas was received at the court of Vidisa in the 14th year of the reign of King, Bhagabhadra. As this corresponds to about 113 B.C. Antialcidas seems to have been reigning about that time. It is not improbable that Antialcidas sought the friendship of the Indian King in his struggle against Menander.

1. King Bhagabhadra has been identified with Bhadraka the 5th King of the Sunga Dynasty, JHAI, p. 355
2. 187 B.C. - 81 - 126 B.C 14th year = 113 B.C.
3. V.D. Mahajan, Ancient India, p. 508
DECLINE OF EUCRATIDIAN LINEAGE

During the closing years of the first century B.C. Gpadhara and Afghanistan were in the possession of princes of the EuCRATidian house. Amongst those princes Diomedes, Epander, Philomenus, Artemidorus and Peucelaus may probably be associated with the city of Pushkalavati, which seems to have been the provenance of coins with the humped bull on the reverse.

An interesting coin-type actually represents on the observe the city goddess of Pushkalavati (Pukhalavadi-devade) wearing a mural crown and holding a lotus (pushkala) in her right hand, as on the reverse the Indian bull. The EuCRATidian princes of the Takhashila and Pushkalavati regions as would be seen were ousted by the Sakes of the lower Sindhu valley under their king Maues (c. 20 B.C.A.D. 20) about the beginning of the first century A.D. Maues imitated the 'Artemis Indian bull' type of the coins of king Artemidorus, probably of Pushkalavati.

Another branch of the house of EuCRATidias was possibly represented by Amyntas and Hermes who appear to have held sway over the Kafiristan and Kabul regions. Hermes is found associated on some coins with his wife Calliope whose marriage, if she was really an Euthydemid princess, may have been the result of a peace ending the struggle between the houses of Euthydemus and EuCRATidias. On some to other coins of Hermes, he is found to be in association with the Yueh-chi or Kushana chief Kujula Kadphises, who probably acknowledged, during the earlier part of his eventful career, the suzerainty of the Yavana king. Bactria was occupied first by the Sakes and then by the Yueh-chi. About the time of Kujula Kadphises,
the Yuezhi were in actual possession of parts of the Kabul District. Hermas, who flourished in the first half of the first century A.D., was the last Yavana king of the Kabul valley which soon passed to the Parthians and then to the Kushanas.
After Mennander's death, his descendants probably lost their hold on Gaudhara and Afghanistan. Agathocles and Strato I appear to have ruled only over the eastern part of the Punjab. The facts that Strato I possibly began to rule as a minor and that his latest coins represent him as an old man with sunken cheeks go to suggest that his reign covered a period of more than half a century. Thus Strato I appears to have ended his rule not much earlier than 30 B.C. The later Euthydemian princes, viz., Dionysius, Zoilus, Apollonophanes, Hippostratus and Apollodotus (II or III) may be roughly assigned to the latter half of the first century B.C. and Hippostratus and Apollodotus, whose coins were restruck by the Saka king Ages I (e.g. B.C.-A.D. 30) may have actually been descendants of Strato I.

The debased style of the latest issues of Strato I and the joint issues of Strato I and Strato II point to the evil days that befell the princes of the Euthydemian house. The 'Athena Promachos' type of the coins of the rulers of this family was imitated not only by Scythian satraps like Romavula but also by Indian kings like Bhatrayasa, who may have had some share in the overthrow of the Yavanas of the eastern Punjab. A Yavana-raja, whose name is sometimes doubtfully read as Dimita in the Hethigumpha inscription of Kharavela, seems to have flourished about the close of the first century B.C. The record refers to Matura which probably formed a part of his kingdom.
Parthian power extended up to the lower Ganges during the reign of Mithradates I about the middle of the second century B.C. About a century later eastern Iran (the Drangians or Seistan country), originally governed by the viceroys of the Parthian emperors, became an independent kingdom, Arachosia (Kandahar region in southern Afghanistan) forming a province of this new kingdom and must have passed from the Greeks to the Parthians long before the time of Hermaces; probably in the reign of Mithradates I himself. The Parthian king Gondophernes (c. A.D. 21-50), originally a ruler of Arachosia, extirpated Yavana rule from the Kabul region but soon after the Parthians were themselves overthrown by the Kushanas about the middle of the last century A.D.

However the relations of the Yavanas with Indian politics did not end with the establishment of Scytho-Parthian and Kushana supremacy. There is evidence to show that the services of qualified Yavanas were gladly accepted by the new lords of the land. There must also existed numerous petty principalities under Yavana chiefs acknowledging the suzerainty of the Scytho-Parthians and the Kushanas.

In any case the Yavanas lingered over for several centuries even after their main part on the stage of history was over. They met their gradual end just like the Kushanas who also lingered on seeking their demise like a dying elephant.
CULTURAL IMPACT

A. POLITICAL THEORY & ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY

INSTITUTION OF SUB-KINGS

The Seleucids had never employed a system of Sub Kings of their own race. When the heir apparent governed the East he was in theory joint king with his father of the whole Kingdom and Babylon, dated by the two jointly, says Tam.

Euthydemos introduces a new State form, in which a younger son might rule a definite part of the realm, not as a joint king or as a Satrap but as sub-king, with the right of coining.\(^1\)

Raychaudhuri supports this view saying we know that Greek rulers who reigned conjointly sometimes issued joint coins. Thus we have joint coins of:

1. Lysias - Antialkidas
2. Agathokleia - Strabo II
3. Strato I - Strato II
4. Hermias - Kalliope

The only Greeks whose names and portraits appear on a coin or medallion together with those of Euclides are Hellicleis and his wife Laodike.\(^2\)

INDO-GREEK ADMINISTRATION

If the questions of Milinda may be regarded as something more than a mere romance, we have abundant evidence that Menander revived at Sagalassos all the traditions of the "Greek City State". This must have influenced to some extent the urban life in India.

---
1. GIBAI, p. 90
2. EIAI, p. 384
3. E.G. Rawlinson, Bactria, p. 146
It was in the Indo-Greek period that Buddhism was adopted by the Greeks in the North. King Menander was a great companion of the faith. The story of his conversion is related in Milinda Panha and seems to have a historical basis.

After establishing his capital at Sakala, he began to do many acts of piety. In these he seems to have emulated the example of Asoka. He is said to have been charitable attached to the law and a builder of monasteries, gardens, chaitya and wells etc.

Some of his coins bear the emblem of wheel and he calls himself a "Sripatu and dhamma. Buddhist tradition represents him as a savior of Buddhism."

The Milinda Panha gives us a dialogue between Milinda and Nagasena the learned Buddhist monk, very searching questions concerned with Buddhist metaphysics and philosophy were put by Menander to Nagasena and all of them were answered to his satisfaction. The result was that Menander was converted to Buddhism. It is said that Menander's capital at Sakala became a centre of refuge for the Buddhist monks who were prosecuted by Pushyantra. Divya Nadana states that Pushyantra declared that whoever brought the head of a Buddhist monk at Sakala would be paid 100 Dinars. As Menander was a zealous Buddhist, there is nothing strange in his giving protection to the Buddhists who might have been prosecuted by the Sungas.

Milinda Panha also tells us that in the second century B.C., the streets of Sakala, then the capital of India of the Indo-Greek King Menander were continually, resounding with cries of welcome to teachers of every creed.

1. Wheel signifies Buddhism as it has been called Dhamma Chakka during the time of Asoka.
2. ASCI p. 365
3. V.D. Mahajan, Ancient India, p. 306
4. O.S. Sen, Cultural Unity of India, p. 34.
RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

Some scholars are of the view that the Indo-Greek Kings had made a greater impact on India than the invasion of Alexander, the Great.

Dr. J.N. Banerjee maintains that the second Greek conquest of India was more important for India than that of Alexander. The cultural contact between the Indo and Greeks and the Indians for two centuries was considerable and long lasting and both the parties reacted upon each other.

INDIAN INFLUENCE ON INDO-GREEKS

It was not merely a case of Greeks influencing the civilization of India and vice versa. The religious ideals and ideals of Indians were adopted by some of the great men of the ruling race. Recent finds of Prof. K.D. Bajpai amply prove that Agathocles (185 B.C. - 175 B.C.) honoured the Hindu deities, Lord Krishna and Balarama as any other Hindu would do. Shri Krishna has been depicted with 'Chakra' while Balarama is carrying his traditional 'hal and Musal'. If we take into consideration that even the devout Hindu kings have not honoured these Hindu deities in this fashion, it would appear that some Indo-Greek rulers were even more Hindu than the Hindus. What can be a greater tribute to these rulers who had their affinities in the far away Greece?

A large number of Greeks were converted into different Indian religions. The Greeks adopted gradually the Indian way of life. In due course of time they became the children of the soil. They made a noble contribution towards the art of India. As the Greeks had receptive minds they did not hesitate to experiment sometimes on the lines of Indians monetary technique and monographs may be containing the names of Indian die cutters. It was during this period that the foundations of the Gandhara art were laid.

Dr. Bhandarkar informs us that the Indo-Bactrians Greeks were by no means slow to be influenced by Indian and other religious beliefs with which they came in contact.

1. The Kings were of Greek lineage but they settled in and ruled over India.
2. Prof. K.D. Bajpai, op.cit., p.103.
3. Dr.D.H. Bhandarkar, Lectures in Ancient History of India, India, Numismatic, p.36.
The Milinda Panho gives an insight into the Buddhism in the days of Menander who alone finds a prominent place in Indian Buddhist tradition and was a patron of Buddhism.

The Yavana King was converted to Buddhism. It is said that Menander handed over the kingdom to his son, retired from the world and became not only a Buddhist monk but an Arhat. This fits in with Plutarch's story about his ashes which were claimed by every Indian city after his death.

Kshamendra refers to another story associating Menander with the most famous statue of Buddha in Indo-China.

The legends may not always be authentic but the most important is the impression the foreign King must have made on the Indian mind. The Yavanas also appear to have taken keen interest in the Indian literature. An interesting Jataka called Yavana Jataka (Mina Jataka) indicates this, though its date is not certain.

1. A.I.U., p. 113.
2. Plutarch informs us that Menander was so popular among his people that upon his death diverse cities contended for the possession of his ashes.
3. A.I.U., p. 113
Two hundred years Yavan rule must have affected the Indian society to some extent.

Yavanas existed even during the age of the Mauryas and some versions of the "Bijjade" Bhiyotra of Asoka say that there were no Brahmanas and Shramanas in the Yona country.

The Buddhist canonical work 'Majjhima-nikaya' (II. 149) also says that in the land of the Yona and the Kshatriyas there existed only two varnas or social grades viz. brahmanas and Kshatriyas, instead of the traditional Chaturvarna division of the society prevalent in other parts of India. As early, however, as the time of Nandas' Mahabharata the Yavanas as well as the Greeks found a place in the Indian society. The Brahmanas (purohitas) among the Greeks while 'Vanga sastaka' regards them as degraded Kshatriyas. Although there is an apparent discrepancy between the views of the two authorities the social position of a pure brahman and a degraded Kshatriya would practically be the same.

The Mahabharata and Nanda Sastaka appear to speak of the Greeks of Bactria and Afghanistan who established themselves in India in the early years of the second century B.C.

1. S.I.
2. A.I.U., p. 108
3. Prabha, p. 379
These Yavanas gradually became Indianised by adopting Indian names, religions, beliefs and customs and were ultimately absorbed in the Indian population but not before mixing their own customs and culture.

The Mahabhashya and Manu Samhita appear to speak of the Greeks of Bactria and Afghanistan who established themselves in India in the year years of the second century B.C. These Yavanas became Indianised by adopted Indian names religious beliefs and customs and were ultimately absorbed in the Indian population.

Vincent Smith holds that the influence of Buddhist ideas on Christian doctrine may be traced in the Gnostic forms of Christianity, if not elsewhere. The notions of Indian philosophy and religion which filtered into Roman empire during this period, flowed through channels opened earlier.

INDO-GREEKS ASSIMILATED IN INDIA

These (Indo) Greeks, says D.C. Sircar, gradually became Indianised by the adoption of Indian names, customs and religious beliefs and was ultimately merged in the Indian population.

The (Indo) Greeks had very little western Blood in their veins when they settled in India and their influence upon this country was very slight.

They issued, however, some very beautiful and remarkable coins. It is impossible to explain this outburst of artistic gains in the furthest confines of Hellenic influence.

1. A.I.U., p.108
2. EHI. P. 67
3. Dr.D.C. Sircar Society & Administrative in Ancient and Medieval India p. 64
4. I.H.S., p. 216.
Somewhere between 187 and 184 B.C. Demetrius annexed to his kingdom three Seleucid provinces — Area Arachosia and Seistan. With Seistan he acquired the focus of a number of important routes which radiated from the centre, one going eastward by Kandahar to the lower Indus, one going north eastwards by Ghazni and Kabul to the Paropamisades where it joined the main Bactria - Kapisa - Taxila route, one going northward by Herat to Merv and across the Oxus to Bokhara and two main routes to the west, the land road by Persepolis and Susa to Seleucia and Babylonia and perhaps more important, the route which came to the sea at the gulf of Ormuz.

1. Justin, XIII, 6.3
2. Gibai, p. 93.
E. INDO-GREEK INFLUENCE

The Indians learnt much from the Indo-Greeks in the field of numismatics. The Bactrian coins improved the Indian coinage to a large extent. The punch marked crude coins of India were replaced by regular letter shaped coins. The Greek word "drachma" was adopted by the Indians as Drachma. Even Saka and Pahalava coins on silver and copper follow the reduced Indo-Greek standard. The use of Kharoshthi along with Greek on their coins shows that the masses did not know Greek and they might be familiar with the Kharoshthi script.

Gargi Samhita says, about Greek astronomy. The Yavanas should be revered for astronomy. India learnt a lot from the Greeks in the field of astronomy.

1. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India, p. 504.
The history of Bactria is illustrated and supplemented by the magnificent coins which have been from time to time discovered in great quantities and in many cases in an excellent state of preservation. Many of the Indo-Bactrian monarchs are only known to us by their coins.\(^1\)

The earlier Greek Kings minted coins according to the Attic standard based on the drachm of 67.2 gms the obol (1/6 drachm) of 11.2 grains. Silver coinage of this type ranges from hemiobols struck by a King Amyntas, which have recently been found in Afghanistan after their southward expansion, the Greeks adopted a reduced weight with silver coins of 152 and 38 grains.

The Greek Kings issued numerous copper coins, but their metrology is not clear. Gold coins must have been very rare. There exists a very large 20 stater piece of the Bactrian usurper Eucratides and rare staters of a few other Kings.\(^2\)

The first coin to exhibit legends in both the Greek and the Kharoshthi script is a square copper coin of Demetrius. There is a good specimen in this collection.

Demetrius is known as the first King of Bactria and of India. He held sway both in Bactria proper and also in Gandhara and the regions on the side of India when Kharoshthi was used:

1. E.J. Rawlinson, Bactria, p. IX
2. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India, p. 504
THE COINS OF DEMETRIUS

Whitehead enumerates four types of Demetrius coins – Such elephant's scalp and Herakles, elephant's head and conducens, Herakles and Artemis bust of King and winged thunderbolt. They are of silver and copper round and square shaped.

The radical development – introduction on the coinage of a Prakrit legend, written in Kharoshthi beside the Greek legend in policy could only have been due to Demetrius himself not to any sub king (and proves yet again the Demetrius II was coming to his father's instructions). Demetrius himself struck no coins in India, his coins nearly all come from Iran and are practically never found east of the Indus, though one has come from the excavation at Taxila. The first coin to exhibit legends in both the Greek and the Kharoshthi scripts is a square shape coin of Demetrius.

A.K. Narain observes that these types are linked and the legends on their obverse and reverse are identical. The elephant scalp head-dress is no more the monopoly of Demetrius I than is the flat Kansa of Artimachus Theos.

1. R.B. Whitehead, Inde-Greek Coins, p. 12-14
2. GIBAL, p. 139
Eucreatides struck coins of the purely Greek type and weight and bilingual Indian type in silver and in copper, which both types are found in silver only of Heliodorus and of Antialkidas.

D.C. Sircar says that the celebrated Indo-Greek King Eucreatides (c. 175-155 B.C.) imitated the old Persian emperors in assuming the title 'Great King (Basileos Megalon) on his coins. In his later issues, this was translated as Maharaja which became a popular regal title among later Indian rulers.

A suggestion has been made that Indo-Greek coinage influenced even the Gupta coins some five centuries later. According to D.C. Sircar, the commemorative medallions of Samudragupta may well be compared with those of Eucreatides I, showing the names and busts of the parents of the Indo-Greek King.

Sam goes to the extent of suggesting the Bactrian invasion for the sake of gold. He says that one of the reasons, but a very subordinate one, for the Euthydemid invasion of India was probably to secure precious metals, but India was as disappointing as the north had been; no Greek King in India was able to coin gold, the relative scarcity of the larger silver coins. The tetradrachms may suggest that even silver was never too plentiful.

2. D.C. Sircar, Studies in Indian Coins, p.9
3. Ibid, p.14
4. GIBAL, p.112
The chief records of the rulers of this period, emphasises Japson, are their coins which are found in extraordinary variety and abundance. From them we learn of the existence of thirty-eight kings and two queens, all bearing purely Greek names who reigned in Bactria and India during the period than about 250 B.C. to 25 B.C. The great majority of these rulers are otherwise unknown. The coins which they struck have survived while every other memorial of their lives has perished.

It is a curious fact that certain specimen of coins struck in Bactria before 200 B.C. are of Nickel, a metal which is supposed to have been discovered in Europe in the 18th century.

Dr. Bhandarkar points out at the Indian influence on the Indo-Greek coinage. He says a Hindu divinity may appear under Hellenic garb, on Indo Bactrian coins.

On coins of Agathocles, Zeus bears in his hand the three headed Hekate. On the coins of Philo Xenus and Telepus, we find a radiate figure of a Sun God bearing a long sceptre.

1. R.J. Japson, Ancient India, p. 123.
A KALEIDOSCOPE OF COINS

The Indo Greek Coins present a Kaleidoscope appearance in the matter of shape, effaces, legends etc. They are given some firsts to India in the field of numismatics.

1. We come across actual specimens of gold coins for the first time during this period. They were issued by Diodotus, Eucaetides and Buthydemus; but they were confined to Bactria and were never issued in India.

2. A few legendless gold coins are attributed to Menander on the basis of their types. If they are really issued by Menander, then they may be the earliest gold coins issued on the soil of India.

3. A few pieces of Pantaleon and Agathocles are known in Bickel and they are the earliest coins in the world issued in this metal.

4. Strato II had used lead for some of his coins.

5. The rare gold stater and silver tetradrachm of Diodotus and Buthydemus were struck on Attic standards. (The Indo-Greeks generally followed the Irania weight standard rather than Greek one.

6. The Silver Indo-Bactrian rulers are didrachms of Apollodootus and Philoxenus, they are all round and struck to Persian standard.

7. Copper coins, square for the most part, are very numerous and are believed to have been issued on the standard of the local copper coins of Taxila.

8. The portraits on these coins are realistic and boldly drawn and show clearly what type of men these early foreign invaders of India were.
9. They introduced the effigy of Greek Gods and goddesses of different appearances.

10. Inscription is another feature on these coins, a feature which was new to India.

11. Coins bearing inscription on both the sides. Greek on the obverse-Prakrit or Bharoshtai on the reverse have been identified as India issues.
Like Alexander the Great, who founded many cities in India, the Indo-Greek kings also followed in his foot steps.

Demetrius built what was virtually an Indian city to be his capital and Menander who carried on the Bactrian tradition, took for his capital- the Indian Sagala and not Greek Bactra. Apart from policy the same motives of convenience may have come into play as those which led later Parthian kings to make Ctesiphon and not Seleucia their capital.¹

Art of the Indo-Greek period may well have combined the architectural excellence of East and West.² This must have provided the seed for the germination of the Gandhar Art some 200 years later.

The Indian art and architecture were influenced in the days of Demetrius and Menander, but no Greek building has been discovered. Greek decorative art is said to have been merged with the Indian motifs.

---

1. GIBAI, p.66
2. H.G. Rawlinson, Bactria, p.146.